

In the Claims:

1 (cancelled) A surgical ratchet (10) having a handle (10), a driver (14) received within the handle in a rotatable relationship with respect thereto, a ratcheting mechanism (16) interposed between the handle and driver, and a locking mechanism (20) releasably holding the handle to the ratchet mechanism, wherein displacing of the locking mechanism to an unlock position moves a locking obstruction (32) out of an obstructing position thereby permitting easy release of the ratchet mechanism from the handle and ready disassembly of the ratchet mechanism from the handle.

2 (currently amended) A surgical ratchet (10) assembly having a handle (10), a driver (14) received within the handle in a rotatable relationship with respect thereto, a ratcheting mechanism (16), and a locking mechanism (20) releasably holding the assembly together, wherein displacing of the locking mechanism to an unlock position moves a locking obstruction (32) out of an obstructing position thereby permitting easy disassembly of the assembly [The ratchet (10) of claim 1], wherein the locking mechanism (20) comprises a ring (24) rotatable on the handle (12), the ring having a surface selectively biasing a ball (32) into or out of a recess (34) to engage or disengage the locking obstruction ratchet mechanism (16) to lock or unlock the assembly.

3 (currently amended) The ratchet assembly (10) of claim 2, wherein the locking mechanism (20) comprises a surface against which a user may apply pressure to effectuate a change in interactivity of components in order to engage or disengage the ratchet mechanism (16) to lock or unlock the assembly.

4 (currently amended) The ratchet assembly (10) of claim 2, wherein a selector (50) enables a user to activate, deactivate, or lock the ratcheting mechanism (16).

5 (currently amended) The ratchet asscmby (10) of claim 2-4, wherein the locking mechanism (20) is comprised of a selector (50) having a position in which at least one pawl (44, 46) is in an engaged position, wherein, when the selector is in the engaged position, the at least one pawl locks the ratchet mechanism against free movement in a selected direction.

6 (currently amended) The ratchet assembly (10) of claim 2-4, wherein the locking mechanism (16) is comprised of a selector (50) having a position in which at least one pawl (44, 46) is in a released position, wherein, when the selector is in the released position, the at least one pawl disengages the ratchet mechanism, thus permitting free motion in either direction.

7 (currently amended) A surgical ratchet (10) assembly having a handle (10), a driver (14) received within the handle in a rotatable relationship with respect thereto, a ratcheting mechanism (16), and a locking mechanism (20) releasably holding the assembly together, wherein displacing of the locking mechanism to an unlock position moves a locking obstruction (32) out of an obstructing position thereby permitting easy disassembly of the assembly [The ratchet (10) of claim 1], wherein a portion of the driver (14) protrudes from an end (36) of the handle (12), thereby presenting an impaction surface enabling the ratchet assembly to be used as an impactor.

8 (currently amended) The ratchet assembly (10) of claim 2-4, wherein the ratcheting mechanism (16) comprises

- (a) a housing (22) in which left and right hand pawls (44, 46) are pivotably connected and selectively pivotably engageable by a cam selection device (50) for selection of a ratcheting direction; and
- (b) a toothed hub (52) connected, at least indirectly, to the handle.

9 (currently amended) The ratchet assembly (10) of claim 8, wherein the cam selection device (50) comprises a cam having a cam surface (53) against which an end (66, 67) of the at least one pawl (44, 46) rides and wherein relative movement of the cam surface to the end of the at least one pawl causes the pawl to pivot in a prescribed manner.

10 (currently amended) The ratchet assembly (10) of claim 8, wherein an end (66, 67) of the at least one pawl (44, 46) engaging the toothed hub (52) is formed so as to permit relative rotation with respect to the hub in one rotational direction, and to block rotation in the opposite rotational direction.

11 (currently amended) A surgical ratchet (10) having a handle (12), a driver (14) received within the handle in a rotatable relationship with respect thereto, a ratcheting mechanism (16) ~~interposed between the handle and driver~~, and a locking mechanism (20) releasably holding the handle to the ratchet mechanism, wherein displacing the locking mechanism to an unlock position moves a locking obstruction (32) out of an obstructing position thereby permitting easy disassembly,

~~wherein the locking mechanism (20) comprises a ring (24) rotatable on the handle, the ring having a surface (53) which selectively biases a ball (32) into or out of a recess (34) to engage or disengage the ratcheting mechanism (16) to lock or unlock the assembly, whereby displacing of the locking mechanism (20) into an unlock position moves the locking obstruction (32) into or out of an obstructing position thereby permitting locking or easy release of the ratcheting mechanism from the handle and ready disassembly of the ratcheting mechanism from the handle,~~

~~wherein the ratcheting mechanism (16) comprises~~

~~(a) a housing (22) in which left and right hand pawls (44, 46) are pivotably connected and selectively pivotably engageable by a cam selection device (50) for selection of a ratcheting direction, the cam selection device comprising a cam having a cam surface against which an end of the at least one pawl rides and wherein relative movement of the~~

cam surface to the end of the at least one pawl causes the pawl to pivot in a prescribed manner;

(b) a toothed hub (52) connected, at least indirectly, to the handle, and

(c) a selector (50) which has a position in which at least one pawl (44, 46) is in an engaged position, wherein, when the selector is in the engaged position, the at least one pawl locks the ratchet mechanism against free movement in a selected direction, thus enabling a user to activate, deactivate, or lock the ratcheting mechanism.

12 (currently amended) A surgical ratchet (10) assembly having a handle (10), a driver (14) received within the handle in a rotatable relationship with respect thereto, a ratcheting mechanism (16), and a locking mechanism (20) releasably holding the assembly together, wherein displacing of the locking mechanism to an unlock position moves a locking obstruction (32) out of an obstructing position thereby permitting easy disassembly of the assembly. The ratchet (10) of claim 1, wherein the handle (12) is a T-bar (138).

13 (currently amended) A surgical ratchet (10) assembly having a handle (10), a driver (14) received within the handle in a rotatable relationship with respect thereto, a ratcheting mechanism (16), and a locking mechanism (20) releasably holding the assembly together, wherein displacing of the locking mechanism to an unlock position moves a locking obstruction (32) out of an obstructing position thereby permitting easy disassembly of the assembly. The ratchet (10) of claim 1, wherein the handle (12) includes an interface (140) for receiving a T-bar attachment (138).

14 (currently amended) A tool kit (150) for surgical use, the tool kit including at least the following components:

(a) a surgical ratchet assembly (10) of claim 2 having a handle (12), a driver (14) received within the handle in a rotatable relationship with respect thereto, a

~~ratcheting mechanism (16) interposed between the handle and driver, and a locking mechanism (20) releasably holding the handle to the ratchet mechanism, wherein displacing of the locking mechanism to an unlock position moves a locking obstruction (32) out of an obstructing position, thereby permitting easy release of the ratchet mechanism from the handle and ready disassembly of the ratchet mechanism from the handle;~~

- (b) at least one tool selected from a group of tools consisting of drills (134), taps (136), guide pins (130), screwdrivers (132), reamer drivers, and wire introducers; and
- (c) a case (160) for receiving the ratchet and the at least one tool.